

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 BEIRUT 04419 071337Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----128103 071338Z /46

O R 071305Z SEP 77
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5133
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

S E C R E T BEIRUT 4419

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDIP, PBOR, LE, IS, SY, PLO
SUBJECT: BECHIR GEMAYEL SUPPORTIVE OF ARRANGEMENTS IN SOUTH

POLITICAL OFFICER MOLINEAUX MET WITH BECHIR GEMAYEL
SEPTEMBER 6 FOR PREVIOUSLY ARRANGED LUNCHON SOUTH
LEBANON. BECHIR IS AS SKEPTICAL AS EVER THAT PALES-
TINIANS WILL MAKE UNILATERAL CONCESSIONS. "THERE IS
NO SANTA CLAUS," HE SAID. HE DID ACCEPT, HOWEVER,
POLITICAL OFFICER'S ARGUMENT THAT UNILATERAL PALES-
TINIAN WITHDRAWAL, IF IT HAPPENS, WOULD BENEFIT
LEBANESE, PARTICULARLY LEBANESE CHRISTIANS IN SOUTH,
AND THAT NOTHING WOULD BE LOST BY AT LEAST GIVING
PALESTINIANS A CHANCE. POLITICAL OFFICER STRESSED
THAT PALESTINIANS WERE SAYING THEY WERE PREPARED TO
WITHDRAW BUT COULD NOT DO SO IF OTHER PARTIES IN AREA
TOOK ADVANTAGE OF WITHDRAWAL TO STRENGTHEN THEIR OWN
POSITIONS OR TO ATTACK PALESTINIANS. AT END OF CON-
VERSATION, BECHIR ASKED THAT HE BE ADVISED WHEN
PALESTINIANS WERE READY TO BEGIN WITHDRAWALS, SO THAT
HE COULD GIVE APPROPRIATE INSTRUCTIONS TO HIS MEN

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IN THE SOUTH.

COMMENT: ALTHOUGH IT RUNS AGAINST GRAIN OF HIS TOTAL
MISTRUST OF THE PALESTINIANS, AND ALTHOUGH HE IS
UNWILLING IN THE LONG RUN TO ACCEPT ANYTHING LESS THAN
COMPLETE PALESTINIAN DISARMAMENT IN LEBANON,
BECHIR SEEMS PREPARED TO RESTRAIN CHRISTIAN FORCES

IN THE SOUTH FOR SAKE OF FACILITATING PALESTINIAN
WITHDRAWAL THEREFROM. HIS INFLUENCE WITH CHRISTIAN
FORCES IN SOUTH IS QUESTIONABLE, BUT IT IS CERTAINLY
DESIRABLE TO HAVE HIM ON BOARD AS WELL. CHARGE WILL
INFORM FONMIN BOUTROS AT APPROPRIATE OPPORTUNITY THAT
WE UNDERSTAND BECHIR IS PREPARED TO BE COOPERATIVE
AND WISHES TO BE INFORMED WHEN IMPLEMENTATION TO
BEGIN, SO THAT BOUTROS CAN TAKE APPROPRIATE STEPS.
LANE

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NNN

Message Attributes

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